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The Gull

Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter
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February Meeting:
Secrets of the Bay
backpage

News from the
Ranch
Panama Committee
Duck Days
page 11

Hosting at ACR
Gifts and Bequests
Calendar
page 12

Seed Sale/Book Sale
page 13

Kenya Safari
page 14

Observations
page 16

Birding Classes
page 17

Back Yard Birder
Breeding Bird Atlas
page 18

Field Trips Calendar
page 19

The following letter was sent to Audubon chapters by Elizabeth Raisbeck, Senior Vice President for Regional and Governmental Affairs for National Audubon.

Most of America is aware that a political revolution of great import happened in November, but few are aware of the implications for the environment.

I do not exaggerate when I say that some provisions in the Contract with America, produced by the new Congressional leadership, would dismantle the environmental protection framework of national legislation and federal programs built over the last 25 years. Some of the proposals in the Contract are truly revolutionary, and the new Congressional leadership is coupling it with proposals for massive budget cuts that are very likely to cripple vitally important federal programs such as enforcement of pollution laws, listing of species under the Endangered Species Act and habitat acquisition. Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of the proposals is a radical change in the individual's relationship to his/her private property and the government's rights and obligations to provide community safeguards to each of us.

When the 104th Congress convenes January 4, we can expect a flood of Republican-led initiatives to fulfill their goals in the "Contract With America" in 100 days. Time is very short. The new Republican leadership is very disciplined, and we can expect much faster action on legislation than we have seen in recent Congresses. Among those first out of the gate will be legislation to prohibit unfunded mandates by the federal government, some kind of rescission (withdrawal of dollars already allocated) legislation that could prohibit funding for

programs that are due for reauthorization such as the National Biological Survey, the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act. There may be a bill to put a moratorium on all environmental regulations, anywhere from 100 days to two years. The Contract will be enacted into law through 10 different bills. When one of those, the Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act, is dropped in, its provisions will change our historical interpretation of property rights under the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution.

Never has a greater challenge to environmental protection surfaced in this country, not even in the days of Interior Secretary James Watt and EPA Administrator Ann Gorsuch. Our early Hill visits tell us that few House Members are aware of what is actually in the massive fine print in the Contract. As knowledgeable and committed environmentalists, our chapters provide a critically important citizens' voice to tell our elected representatives that the Contract is unacceptable and harmful to us and to our children and grandchildren.

The National Audubon Society is calling on all of our chapters and our larger membership to sound the alarm to the media and to elected officials about the threats posed to the environment in this Contract. If this Contract, as embodied in the Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act, is enacted by Congress, we can expect the following:

← Any person whose private property values are reduced by more than 10 percent due to government regulation has an entitlement to be paid the lost value by the federal government. That may sound like great news for citizens, but what if your neighbor wants to build a chemical plant or start a hog farm or fill in his wetland,

Seed Sale and Book Sale: February 24-25 (page 13)

which will cause flooding on your property? Under the new law, the federal government would have to pay your neighbor not to pollute or not to cause flooding on your property. This would turn on its head our traditional concept of the citizen's right to be protected from irresponsible interests that may have a lot more money than you. Now the community, namely Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer, will have to pay developers and polluters to be responsible citizens and not pollute

← State and local governments could no longer have to comply with federal laws or regulations under the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, or the Endangered Species Act, unless the federal government pays in full for the incurred costs (so-called unfunded mandates). While this may seem reasonable on its face, the fact is these costs are largely exaggerated, and exemptions for complying with many regulations have long been granted local governments. The proposals in the Contract for fixing this problem will not help municipalities and state government meet their obligations to provide clean water, clean air and a safe community.

← Polluters would be relieved of the obligation to pay for their pollution either under the new property rights provisions, or through a new set of regulatory requirements that would allow polluters easy access to the courts to stop governments from enforcing the law.

The Message

We need to spread the word. The following message should go not only to our elected representatives (congressmen and senators), but to our local newspapers and our friends and neighbors who may be unaware of the consequences of this legislation:

← Americans have the right to clean air, clean water, abundant wildlife and enjoyment of open spaces. Some proposals in the Contract would nullify Americans' access to these basic rights. ← Our air, land and water, and the health of our food supply must meet existing national health standards. Releasing local and state governments from their responsibilities to provide these things is unacceptable. ← Polluters, not the taxpayers, should

pay the cost of cleaning up pollution. To help the free market discourage more pollution, make polluters pay for cleanup.

← The 65 million homeowners in America should be protected from irresponsible actions by others on neighboring property. Governments must retain the right to protect homeowners from irresponsible land owners and developers.

← The Contract is a war against the environment cleverly hidden in a cloak of happy platitudes for the average citizen. In reality, it will not protect the American public but will create a huge financial and red-tape burden. It will roll back 25 years of environmental protection. It will mean dirty air, polluted water, poisons in our food, massive habitat destruction for our wildlife.

Thank you for your help in revealing the Contract for what it truly is and saving 25 years of sound environmental legacy.

Elizabeth Raisbeck

The following two DRAFT letters-to-the-editor can be used as written, or edited to present a more personal point of view, with some local examples, if possible. Remember to keep it short! The letter should be retyped on your own stationery and submitted to a local paper.

Dear Editor:

I am wondering if anyone is reading the fine print on the Republican leadership's Contract with America as embodied in their proposed legislation, the Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act. While this act never mentions the environment, it proposes a shopping list of ways to tie the government's hands from protecting us citizens from powerful corporate interests in dozens of ways.

For instance, Title 9 of the proposed Act says that any person whose private property values are reduced by more than 10% due to government regulation has an automatic entitlement to be paid the lost value by the federal government. That may sound like great news for citizens, but what if my neighbor wants to build a chemical plant or start a hog farm or fill in his wetland, which will cause flooding on my property? Under the new law, the federal government would have to pay my neighbor not to

pollute or not to cause flooding on my property. This would turn on its head our traditional concept of the citizen's right to be protected from irresponsible interests that may have a lot more money than me. Now the community, namely Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer, will have to pay developers and polluters to be responsible citizens and not pollute. Some 65 million homeowners in this country should take a look at the fine print here. The press should too!

-or-

Dear Editor:

The [date] article on the Republicans' Contract with America described a number of the bills designed to implement the Contract and the goals of the Republicans' agenda. While on the surface some of the rhetoric sounds reasonable, there is more to the Contract than meets the eye. Rather than being a Contract with "mainstream" America, the Contract is a deal with those Americans who do not want to abide by laws that are designed to protect public health and safety and the environment. Some of the provisions buried in the Contract would undermine these protective laws, while increasing bureaucratic red tape in the federal government and costing taxpay- ers more.

For example, the Contract would radically redefine traditional American property rights in a way that would provide a new subsidy for special interests and harm the average homeowner. We, as taxpayers, would have to pay polluters not to pollute. In addition, the Contract would exempt state and local governments from many laws that apply to the private sector, allowing them to disregard environmental and labor laws, among others. The legislation in the Contract would also tie up scarce government resources with burdensome analyses of limited usefulness, delaying or weakening laws that protect our public health and safety.

Are these harmful provisions that the citizens of [place] really want from this Contract? I hope Congressman/woman [name of Representative] does what's best for [place] by voting against these destruc-tive provisions of the Contract with America.

News from around the Bay

BOLINAS, BOUVERIE & CYPRESS GROVE PRESERVES

David Bouverie, our friend and benefactor, died on Monday, December 5. It was David's gracious gift of land which became the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. He supported that gift by sharing his own wealth. He personally raised considerable additional funds to maintain the preserve and to support the environmental education programs he helped guide.

David's insistence on fiscal responsibility will be imprinted on our board of directors for the foreseeable future. It was at his urging we undertook a \$3 million endowment drive which was so successful it raised \$5 million. David had the vision to know we could achieve such goals and he and his friends contributed generously in an effort to assure ACR's financial stability.

David's ideas of land stewardship guide our use of the Bouverie Preserve. He believed the land should serve to provide a base for environmental education while retaining its pristine beauty. He loved his rose garden and its reflection in the pool outside his home, but he loved equally the garden of wildflowers, the oaks, and the wildlife which are the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. One of the many projects which will leave David's imprint on the land for centuries was the replanting of oaks with the help of children who visited the preserve. That may be his most lasting legacy of all.

Volunteer Opportunities

Harbor Seal Study at Tomales Bay. This spring marks the 5th year of our Harbor Seal Census/Disturbance Study. Here is your chance to join us in monitoring the goings on at the Harbor Seal colony near the mouth of Tomales Bay. The commitment is for a minimum of 5 sessions of at least 4 or 5 hours each during the period from March through June. There is no set time since observation times are matched to low tides. We

need volunteers who are willing to monitor Harbor Seal numbers and record observations about disturbances from oyster diggers, kayakers, fishermen and whoever else may happen by. If you are interested, please call Mary Ellen King at (707) 537-1546.

Work Day at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Yes, it's that time again when we're preparing for the '95 public season. Sunday, March 5, is your chance to join us for last-minute chores to get the Ranch ready for spring visitors. You do the work and we'll provide the FREE LUNCH! There is a catch: you need to register by calling (415) 868-9244. Only then can we plan to provide enough food.

Dan Murphy

PANAMA COMMITTEE

In last month's *Gull* you read about the formation of a Golden Gate Audubon special interest group to explore conservation outreach to Latin America. Berkeley member Miles McKey held several meetings at his home last fall with interested members and they selected Panama for further study. The Panama Committee, inspired by the International Birds in the Balance Project, provides an opportunity for our members to develop helping relationships and learn more about our important neighbors to the south.

There's a young, active Audubon chapter in Panama with an elected board made up primarily of Panamanians. Chapter President, Norita Scott-Pezet, elected last spring, visited the Bay Area in November. Ideas were discussed for how GGAS might support her chapter's efforts.

At the final 1994 meeting of the Panama Committee on December 5th, some brainstorming ideas for creative assistance to Panama that need further investigation were discussed. Some of them are:

- educating ourselves and our membership about Panama/Latin America

- understanding the tropical habitat significance of 70,000 acres of Panama Canal land reverting back to Panama
- offering assistance with Panama Audubon chapter organization
- assisting with in-country public education projects
- possibility of providing field guides and equipment
- forming relationships with other Panamanian organizations in the Bay Area and with the official political representation here

The committee feels strongly that it must first educate itself, understand what the Panama chapter wants, and balance the ability to extend help against all the other GGAS commitments. This is an ambitious and interesting project. If you'd like to learn more about the Panama Committee, call Miles McKey at (510) 652-5854. Our next meeting will be on Monday, February 13, at Miles' house at 76 Hillcrest Rd., Berkeley, and we would welcome new faces.

Corinne Stefanick

DUCK DAYS

They celebrate mid-winter (Feb. 17 - 20) in Davis with Duck Days, a 4-day wetlands festival of field trips, films, workshops, noted speakers and kids' events. Headquarters for registration and activities will be at 203 E. 14th St., Davis. A \$15 donation is requested for a pass which allows participation in most events. Children under 16 are free.

For further information, write to:

Duck Days
P.O. Box 5000-141
Davis, CA 95617

WANTED: BIRDATHON ORGANIZER

Spirited person to energize teams and organize prizes for this important fund-raising activity. Hard work. Good fun. Great people. Call (510) 843-2222.

TIME TO HOST AT AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Once again the egrets and herons are returning to their traditional nesting site in the tops of the redwood trees at our sanctuary, Audubon Canyon Ranch, on Bolinas Lagoon in Marin county. Each year thousands of people come to witness this wonderful and awesome event. And each year we offer our Golden Gate Audubon members an opportunity to help make Audubon Canyon Ranch a successful sanctuary. How? By acting as hosts to the many visitors who come to the Ranch on weekends during the nesting season.

What does hosting mean? It means welcoming people to the Ranch and showing them where to park. It means telling them about the Ranch, the egrets and the herons. It means offering them a brochure and showing them where the bookstore and museum are located. It means sending them on their way up the hill to view the herony and then greeting the next group of visitors.

We'll send you an information packet before your hosting day so that you will have answers to everyone's questions. And if you don't have the answers, don't worry; there's always an ACR staff person around for those questions you're not sure about. There is plenty of time to chat to interesting new people from all over the country and the world. The people are fascinating and there are many new friends to be made.

You won't be alone in your hosting. Each day we try to have at least four to six other GGAS members acting as hosts. With so much help, there's plenty of time to take your own walk to view the nesting birds and perhaps hike the three-mile trail if you're feeling energetic.

It's a lot of fun. And it's a great way to get outdoors on a weekend and see beautiful Bolinas Lagoon and the nesting egrets and herons.

Please join us. Call the GGAS Office at (510) 843-2222 and reserve your hosting day. This year we'll be hosting on the following dates:

March 18, 19, 25, 26; and July 4, 8, 9, 15, 16.

Pick a day, we'll see you there!

HONORS TO JOE MORLAN

Joe Morlan, founder and keeper of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, was honored at the Oakland Christmas Count Compilation Dinner for his 20 years of weekly and daily rare-bird updates with distinction. Expecting to be presented with a mug (GGAS's version of the gold watch), Joe was floored to find that Golden Gate Audubon and dozens of friends and users of the Rare Bird Alert had chipped in to buy him a new Kowa scope. Accompanying the scope was a framed certificate reading: "To Joseph Morlan with deepest appreciation for 20 years of excellent service providing the Northern California Rare Bird Alert -- from Golden Gate Audubon Society and the Northern California Birding Community." His surprise, amazement, and pleasure were gratifying to those who had kept the secret for months.

Joe's vision and diligence had been benefitting bird watchers for 20 years. The tape provided a means for all who were interested to learn about exciting finds in a timely manner, certainly a giant step up from word-of-mouth. Under Joe's guidance, the weekly update was joined by the daily update. Directions and descriptions were clear and easy to follow. And his persistent questioning, sometimes to the irritation of those on the receiving end, insured that reported birds really were what they were purported to be. The Northern California Rare Bird Alert was a model for others around the country, and, in Joe's words, it "increased our knowledge by multiplying the number of observers motivated to go into the field looking for rarities and in the process, finding new rarities."

It's certainly a 20-year record of which to be proud.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For GGAS

Robert DaCosta

Ruth Dement

Naomi R. Groeschel

Michael and Jane Larkin

Anne Macpherson

Robert and Mary Mayer

George and Helene Strauss

Diane E. Wilson

For Papageno Project

Bernice Prince Biggs

Joan R. Keller

In Memory of Juanita Arnerich

Paul A. Arnerich

In Memory of Carlos Jordan

Norbert and Phyllis Bischof

Diane Ichiyasu

Elenor Mulkey

In Memory of Hope A. McLoughlin

Erika M. Isomura

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor, or if unspecified, at the discretion of GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

CALENDAR

Monday, February 6: San Francisco Conservation Committee, 7:30 p.m.. Call office for location.

Thursday, February 9: General Meeting - Judy Irving, film-maker, presents "Secrets of the Bay," Northbrae Community Church, 942 The Alameda, Berkeley, 7:30 p.m. (see back page)

Monday, February 13: East Bay Conservation Committee, GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, February 13: Panama Committee, 76 Hillcrest Rd, Berkeley, 7:30 p.m. Call Miles McKey at (510) 652-5854 with questions. (see p. 11)

Friday, February 17 - Monday, February 20: California Duck Days. (see p. 11)

Monday, February 27: Board of Directors, GGAS office, 7:30 p.m.

SEED SALE/BOOK SALE

We're adding books to our next seed sale on February 24 and 25, 1995. We received an exceedingly generous gift of books from the library of the late Carlos Jordan. We've added many of these to our library, but some are duplicates and some are not of sufficient general interest to fit into our library. To this end, we have been culling our own book collection, setting up new guidelines that we think will make the collection of interest and value to more of our members. We will be selling the culls from our collection at this time. In addition, we are hoping that GGAS members will be motivated to weed out their own libraries and donate their rejects to our sale. One person's reject is another's treasure. Donated books should be boxed and clearly labeled with the donor's name and address, and delivered to the GGAS office February 21, 22, or 23. A statement for tax purposes will be sent to you after the sale.

Seed orders with checks made out to GGAS, and with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, should be received in the GGAS office by Thursday, February 16. Pick-up of seed will take place Friday, February 24, 3-6 p.m., and Saturday, February 25, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Golden Gate Audubon Office in Berkeley.

We will have extra seed on hand so if you didn't order enough, or forgot to order any seed at all, come on down to the office. We'll have the seed you need! (But please don't take this as an invitation to neglect ordering -- we won't have a profligate supply of extra seed.)

Volkman seed is the best there is: it contains no waste seed, and has been cleaned of debris and dust so you get what you pay for. And your purchases provide an important source of income to GGAS, allowing us to continue our conservation, education, and field-trip activities.

GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE

ORDER AND PREPAY BY FEBRUARY 16, 1995
PICK UP FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

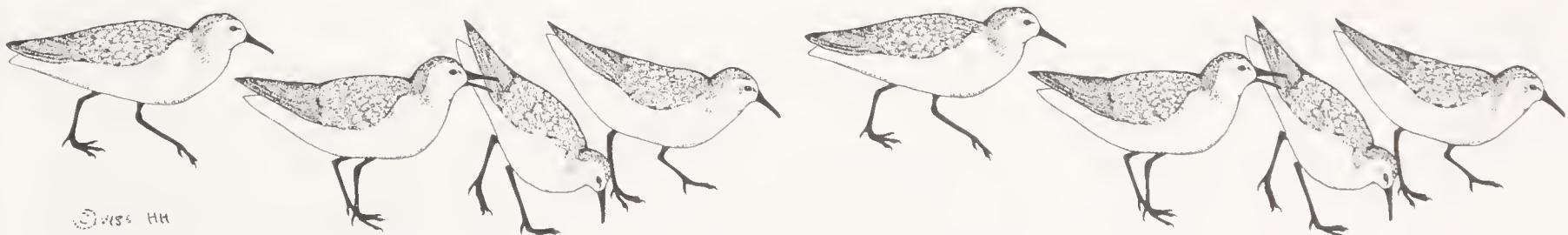
SEED	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN MIX	20 lbs.	\$10.00
<i>Contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed</i>	50 lbs.	\$20.00
VOLKMAN PREMIUM	20 lbs.	\$ 9.00
WILD BIRD SEED		
<i>Composed of only red and white millet -- no sunflower seeds (no squirrels)</i>	50 lbs.	\$17.00
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	25 lbs.	\$18.00
	50 lbs.	\$30.00
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER CHIPS	25 lbs.	\$28.00
<i>(No waste!)</i>		
NIGER (THISTLE) SEED	5 lbs.	\$10.50

FEEDERS	SUB-TOTAL
DUNCRAFT SEED FEEDER 16"	\$28.00
THISTLE FEEDER	\$10.00
HUMMINGBIRD (window)	\$10.00
ZINGER (saucer style)	\$15.00
HUMMINGBIRD (16 oz. bottle)	\$12.00
SUET CAGE (2" x 5" x 5")	\$ 5.50
SUET CAKE (11.75 oz.)	\$ 2.75
FEEDER POLE (sectional)	\$16.00

Be sure to include
your check with a
stamped and self-
addressed envelope.

SUB-TOTAL	
8.25% SALES TAX	
TOTAL	
CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS	
GRAND TOTAL	

Pick up in Berkeley
at the GGAS office



ON SAFARI: KENYA, AUGUST, 1994

Monday. We were met on the other side of customs by our leader Francis Kitayi who then introduced us to our two drivers John and Joseph. When we arrived at the Safari Park Hotel just outside Nairobi, there was just enough time to check our bags, freshen up, and for Jerry Johnson to photograph a pair of Bronze Sunbirds feeding their fledglings. Reinvigorated, we were off to the Lang'ata Bird Sanctuary.

The Lang'ata Bird Sanctuary is the private home of Pat and Mo Frere. Mr. Frere had just begun to show us the grounds when he called in one of my most-wanted African birds: the White-starred Brush Robin, a bird named for a small white patch between its slate-blue head and golden breast. After our walk, Mrs. Freres brought us tea and cookies while we watched Red-cheeked Cordon-bleus at the bird feeder. Then we were back in the vans, through Nairobi rush hour traffic, cocktails, dinner and, at long last, bed.

Tuesday. We were off on safari in earnest. We headed south-east for Amboseli National Park. There were rollers and various members of the shrike family along the freeway. Augur Buzzards, Bateleurs, and vultures soared overhead. John pointed out distant Wildebeests, zebras, and a Giraffe as he drove. Eventually we turned off the blacktop and headed toward the park on dirt roads. As we approached the park the animals became more numerous. We found a Kori Bustard alongside the road; it is an enormous terrestrial bird, but it looked small compared to the Ostriches we had just passed. The landscape is dry and mostly treeless. We passed a Pygmy Falcon, a marsh with African Jacana, and groups of Masai herding their cattle. As we approached the entrance to the Amboseli Serena Lodge, we were greeted by a large male Olive Baboon sitting on a boulder next to the road. Most of the lodges are located near water and so are oases for wildlife. At Amboseli, the herds of

Thomson's Gazelle, Common Zebra, Wildebeest and Impala would come to drink from a small stream just below the lodge at sundown. After dinner one evening at Amboseli, a Hippopotamus came strolling up to graze on the lawn right below us; it looked up and seemed to realize that it was being watched and then casually walked into the darkness.

A few evenings later at Lake Naivasha, Jill Bryans and Russ Wilson were startled when a hippo walked right between them in the dark. It is not every day that you have an animal the size of a truck pass you on the lawn after dinner. Most of our animal watching was done from the safety of our vans. The animals have become accustomed to the vans scurrying about and treat them as just another animal. The vans have roofs that lift up to allow the passengers to stand and view the wildlife unimpeded by glass. Many times we were so close to zebra, elephant, Giraffe and the other "big game" it was easy to get great photos with even a modest camera.

It is not every day that you have an animal the size of a truck pass you on the lawn after dinner.

For me, one of the trip's highlights occurred when Janet Wessel and I were watching two house cats stalking a Mozambique Nightjar. Suddenly a larger nightjar flew erratically through the lights; I had to force myself to believe what I was seeing- it really was a Pennant-winged Nightjar! Africa is full of fantastic looking birds, but to my mind the Pennant-winged Nightjar is one of the most bizarre. The bird's ninth primary feathers are twice as long as the entire bird. In flight the pennants stream out from just beyond the wrist in the wings and then trail well past the tail. With each flap of the wings they undulate up and down and as the bird changes direction in flight, they trace in parallel the bird's path through the sky. Fortunately the bird

remained close to the lights long enough for most of the group to see it. It was even a new bird for Francis.

Thursday. On the drive from Amboseli to Tsavo West we saw our first Lions; unfortunately we had only a brief look before they disappeared into the brush. Much of the Kenyan landscape is reminiscent of southeastern Arizona with long vistas of rolling hills and mountains that rise abruptly from flat grasslands. Benson Lee and I noticed one mountainside that had a striking resemblance to Elephant Head at the entrance to Madera Canyon in Arizona, but there were actually elephants at the base of this mountain.

We spent the night at the Ngulia Lodge where they make a big deal over feeding the cats. That evening as we were enjoying our dinner we looked up to see that the dining hall had suddenly cleared. Our group was happy to set aside our meal for a while to get a close look at a Leopard eating its dinner in a nearby tree.

Friday. We headed off for Kenya's east coast. The highlight of the day was the Red and Yellow Barbet that Kay MacCaskie spotted. Barbets are unique-looking short-tailed, thick-billed relatives of the woodpeckers. The Red and Yellow Barbet is a tanager-sized bird with black and white bars and spots on the back, tail and wings, a red face with a white cheek patch. The underparts are golden yellow with red undertail coverts; there is a yellow-spotted black band that runs across the breast and the bird has a small black throat patch. The barbets illustrated in the field guide look a bit garish to my eye. When I saw the bird in real life I was surprised at how beautiful it was. The bird seemed to be dressed like the women of Kenya: intense colors and bold patterns that, when put together, initially might seem to clash, but are instead elegant and beautiful.

After hours on the road, we began to descend to the coast. In a matter of a few kilometers the vegetation changed from desert-like to lush and tropical. At Mombasa we headed north and just after sunset we reached our hotel at Watamu on the shore of the Indian Ocean.

Saturday. We banded the lush Sokoke Forest with a local researcher named David. David is studying the recently discovered Sokoke Scops Owl and was able to lead us through the dense, rain-soaked underbrush to a pair of the owls. Later Janet, Francis, David and I waded out on tidal flats to get close looks at Crab Plovers, Terrick Sandpipers, and other shorebirds while the others scoped them from shore. In the afternoon, we split into two groups. Group one enjoyed the accommodations of the Hemmingway Hotel, while the second group went for an adventure along the Sabiki River. To get to the river we had to drive through a

The animals have become accustomed to the vans scurrying about and treat them as just another animal.

typical small village of mud huts with thatched roofs. As we passed through the village we attracted all the village's boys who ran alongside the van. They had no problem following us as Joseph traversed the rutted road. When the road ended, the boys continued to follow us as we walked along the river's edge to the Indian Ocean. The boys had obviously seen birdwatchers before because they knew we were searching for the Malindi Pipit. We did see the pipits and were also pleased to find African Skimmers, Sooty Gulls, White-fronted Plover, a large flock of Lesser Flamingos and thousands of Madagascar Pratincoles.

As we walked back to the van, the village boys asked for pens, pencils or money. Our long sandy walk had slowed Ruth Dement down just a bit and she was constantly surrounded with boys saying "Please grandmother, just twenty shillings. I know you are rich like Michael Jackson please." Ruth was able to say no very politely each time. We all would have liked to help them, but you couldn't give to just one boy and not all the others, and there were so many of them.

Sunday. We headed south toward Mombasa and stopped at the Bamburi Nature Trail. The trail was once a quarry but has been turned into wildlife habitat.

There we had great looks at the little, jewel-like Malachite Kingfisher as it darted into a crocodile lined pond. There were birds and animals everywhere! I could have spent the whole day there. We stopped briefly at the Inter-continental Hotel to drop off our bags and lunch on some of the best Indian food I've ever had. The view from our rooms was exquisite: waves crashing over distant coral reefs, palms below us swaying in the wind, people lounging in the sun, and Mottled Spinetail (swifts) zooming past our balconies. That evening for dinner we boarded a dhow and after we drank a mysterious green cocktail, we sailed off to see the lights of Mombasa. The second leg of our trip would begin tomorrow.

Alan Hopkins

KENYA, 1995

Adventures like these could be yours also. GGAS plans a repeat of last summer's successful trip to Kenya from August 4 to 21, 1995, led again by Kenya's Francis Kitayi and GGAS's Alan Hopkins. The trip features deluxe accommodations, abundant wildlife, both bird and mammal, and visits to many of the major parks in Kenya.

Travel arrangements will be made by Park East Tours and the projected cost is \$4,395 which includes round-trip air-fare from San Francisco and a \$200 donation to Golden Gate Audubon. For information on the next safari to Kenya, call Alan at (415) 664-0983, or the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

Up from the Egg: The Confessions of a Nuthatch Avoider

Birdwatchers top my honors list
I aimed to be one, but I missed.
Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,
My aim turned out to be erratic.
And I bespectacled and binocular,
Exposed myself to comment jocular.
We don't need to know much birdlore,
do we,
To tell a flamingo from a towhee:
Yet I cannot, and never will,
Unless the silly birds stand still.
And there's no enlightenment so obscure
As ornithological literature.
Is yon strange creature a common chickadee,
Or a migrant alouette from Picardy?
You rush to consult your Nature guide
And inspect the gallery inside.
But a bird in the open never looks
Like its picture in the birdie books-
Or if it once did, it has changed its plumage,
And plunges you back into ignorant gloomage.
That is why I sit here growing old by inches,
Watching the clock instead of finches.
But sometimes I visualize in my gin
The Audubon I audubon.

Ogden Nash

Help Save California's Native Wildlife Habitat.



Fill in Line 50 on your tax form.

Dear Tax Preparer:

Please make my voluntary contribution in the amount of \$ to the Rare and Endangered Species Preservation Program on my California State Income Tax Return. Thank you.

Cut Along Dotted Line And Give This To Your Tax Preparer

Observations: December 5 - January 4

Daniel Singer

LOONS TO DUCKS

Two **Yellow-billed Loons** seen on a Monterey Bay pelagic trip Dec. 12 (DLSH) are presumably the same individuals seen on the Monterey Christmas Count Dec. 29. One, an immature, was visible from the Coast Guard jetty in Monterey until at least Jan. 3 (m.ob.). An Arctic Loon reported from the Mendocino headlands, MEN, Dec. 22, is exceptional as there are only two acceptable records for California, but details are sketchy and confirmation of this report seems unlikely. The Laysan Albatross discovered in November at Point Arena, MEN, is still being seen with some frequency (m.ob.), with the latest report on Jan. 3. Northern Fulmars continue to be seen in good numbers from Pigeon Point, SM, with eight on Dec. 27 (BS fide RSTh) and seventeen on Dec. 31 (fide BMCK). Three Flesh-footed Shearwaters were reported from a Dec. 10 Cordell Bank, MRN, pelagic trip. Most unusual was one reportedly seen from Pigeon Point on Dec. 27 (BS fide RSTh). This species is exceptional this close to shore and most land-based reports are best treated with caution. The Dec. 10 Cordell Bank trip reported 300 Short-tailed Shearwaters and "lots" were seen on a Dec. 12 Monterey Bay pelagic trip. A **Manx Shearwater**, well-seen on the Santa Cruz CBC on Dec. 17 (DLSH, SA), would constitute the latest record of this species in California if accepted by the CBRC.

Twenty-five Tundra Swans at Paicines Reservoir, SBT, Dec. 29, is a good showing from a county where they are considered rare (LCh). A Ross' Goose at the Sunnyvale Sewage Ponds, Dec. 17-28, has returned for the fourth consecutive winter (MJM, m.ob.). That no less than five **Emperor Geese** were reported this month is remarkable. One was shot by a hunter, Dec. 11, in Humboldt Bay, HUM (fide RLeV); another was at the Alexander Dairy, DN, Dec. 15-24 (RLeV, AWr); two were at Crescent City Harbor, Dec. 27 - Jan. 2 (ADB); and one was just

north of the town of Bodega, SON, Dec. 27 - Jan. 2 (DSh, m.ob.). This species was last recorded in California in 1991. Eurasian Wigeon continues to be widely reported with thirteen Dec. 16 at Gray Lodge WMA, BUT (TEa), and seven at Colusa NWR, COL, on Dec. 31 (LLu) most notable. Tufted Ducks found last month in Alviso, Sunnyvale, Oakland and San Francisco were still present well into December and additional individuals were found at Lake Mendocino, MEN, Dec. 25 - Jan. 2 (GCh), and Martinez, CC, Dec. 27 (JCS). Up to **thirty-four** additional Oldsquaw reports during the past month is impressive. Of these, up to two along the American River, SAC (m.ob.), three along the Sacramento River in Redding, SHA (BY), and two at Lewiston Reservoir, TRI (BY) are particularly noteworthy.

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A Broad-winged Hawk was found in Inverness on the Point Reyes CBC, MRN, on Dec. 17 (KH). A **Swainson's Hawk** flying over Bolinas, MRN, Dec. 6 (KH) is certainly a very tardy migrant and another over Hwy. 101 in Millbrae, SM, on Dec. 25 (PJM) even more so. This species is almost unknown in California in winter away from recently-discovered sites in the Delta region of San Joaquin County and in adjacent areas of the Central Valley. The only other regular North American winter locale is southern Florida. Rough-legged Hawk is scarce with only two reports this month.

A single Pacific Golden-Plover at Johnson's Oyster Farm, Pt. Reyes, on Dec. 17 (ASH, DSg), and three at the Moss Landing salt ponds, MTY, Jan. 1 (fide DSg) were the only ones reported. One hundred and ninety-one Mountain Plovers north of Davis, YOL, on Dec. 16 (TCo) and eighty still there Jan. 1 (EDG) is the only concentration of this species reported in our region this month. A claim of Long-toed Stint from the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor, SCL, Dec. 18 would be only the second record for California if details are

submitted to and accepted by the CBRC.

Unusual gulls seen during the month include a Franklin's Gull at the Salinas Sewer Ponds, MTY, Dec. 8 (SFB), up to 25 Glaucous Gulls scattered mostly along the coast and inside SF Bay, and small numbers of Black-legged Kittiwakes off the San Mateo coast. It should be noted that the vast majority of Glaucous Gulls found in California are first-winter birds and reports of other age-classes are generally met with some skepticism. Observers are encouraged to fully document any non-first-winter Glaucous Gull. Two Elegant Terns reported from the Santa Cruz CBC on Dec. 17 (fide CKf) are late. Ancient Murrelets are present in good numbers as evidenced by over 30 on the Santa Cruz CBC on Dec. 17 (fide CKf) and 15 - 20 off Laguna Point, MacKerricker State Park, MEN, on Dec. 31 (JRW). Following on the heels of last month's beached individual at Point Reyes were six **Parakeet Auklets** beyond the Cordell Bank on Dec. 10 (DLSH).

HUMMINGBIRDS TO SHRIKES

A Costa's Hummingbird found on the Arcata CBC, HUM, on Dec. 17 was still present through Dec. 24 (fide JCS, AWr). A male Allen's Hummingbird in Watsonville, SCZ, on Jan. 1 (DLSu) is presumably a remarkably early spring arrival. Four *selasphorus* hummingbirds at the Berkeley Botanical Garden, ALA, Dec. 18, (DFW) are from an area where they have wintered in recent years.

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in San Jose, SCL, and Davis were present through at least Dec. 18 and Dec. 23 respectively (m.ob.). Another seen in Monte Rio, SON, on Jan. 1 (fide DSh) returned for the fourth consecutive winter. Red-naped Sapsuckers include one at Point Reyes on Dec. 17 (MMC), one along Gates Canyon Road, SOL, on Dec. 18 (SHp), and a third in Piedmont, ALA, on Dec. 25 (SBT). Most interesting is the presence of perhaps as many as six presumed Red-naped X Red-breasted Sapsuckers in MRN during the month

(fide RS, DSi).

Always a good find during winter months, *empidonax* flycatchers turned up on two CBCs. One "Western" Flycatcher was seen Dec. 29 on the Monterey Peninsula CBC (fide SRo) and three were found on the Moss Landing CBC in Watsonville on Jan. 1 (DSg, CKf). The Davis Eastern Phoebe was seen through Dec. 29 (m.ob.) and another returned to Shady Oaks Park in San Jose for the second year in a row, Dec. 8-28 (SCR, m.ob.). A Vermilion Flycatcher in DN on Dec. 9 (PFS fide RLeV) is almost as far north as it can get in our state. A Tropical Kingbird continued at Oyster Point, SM, through Dec. 11 (PJM) and another (or the same?) turned up near the Cow Palace, SF, Dec. 31 - Jan. 2 (SFi).

Townsend's Solitaires were seen on Mines Road, SCL, Dec. 11 (SCR); in El Granada, SM, Dec. 17-19 (RSTh); and on Mt. Tamalpais, MRN, Dec. 31 (fide DSi). A Sage Thrasher was seen at the San Luis NWR, MER, on Dec. 22 (BoB), and a **Brown Thrasher** near Lincoln, PLA, must have been a surprise, Dec. 20-29 (fide SHp). Bohemian Waxwings have been reported in good numbers from several areas, for example up to 200 at Lee Vining, MON, Dec. 12-17 (DS), and 77 near McArthur, SHA, on Dec. 26 (fide BY). Northern Shrikes were also well reported with one in MEN, Dec. 10-18 (fide JRW), one in HUM, Dec. 17 (JCS), one in SHA on Dec. 20 (JCS), three in MOD, Dec. 21 (JCS), and one in SBT Dec. 29 (LCh).

VIREOS TO GROSBEAKS

The cold, wet weather has certainly affected many of our normally overwintering insectivores and, therefore, it is with some surprise and amazement to me that so many rarities have been discovered. Of two **Solitary Vireo** reports from CBCs, one was of the very rare **eastern form** in Arcata, Dec. 17-18 (fide JCS). Exceptional in winter is a **Warbling Vireo** reported on the San Jose CBC, Dec. 18 (DKe). Noteworthy warbler reports include two Tennessee Warblers in coastal SM on Dec. 17 (AME, RSTh); the continuing Lucy's Warbler in SF through Dec. 28 as well as two others in MTY on Dec. 14 (fide MTY RBA), and Dec. 29 - Jan. 1 (JCS, DPo); a **Magnolia Warbler** in SCZ, Dec. 17 (fide CKf); a male

Black-throated Blue Warbler in SF Dec. 28-29 (said to be present since November); a second-year-in-a-row **Black-throated Green Warbler** in HUM, Dec. 17 (fide JCS); at least nineteen Palm Warblers between MTY and DN; a dozen Black-and-white Warblers between MTY and HUM; an American Redstart in SCZ, Dec. 17 (fide CKf); holdover Northern Waterthrushes in SON through Jan. 2 (FGB) and SCL through Dec. 19 (PJM), and a new find in Del Norte Dec. 18 (fide Arcata RBA); and a male **Hooded Warbler** in SCZ, Dec. 17, present for at least several weeks (fide CKf).

Up to two American Tree Sparrows were in Fall River, SHA, Dec. 26-30 (fide BY) and another was in Watsonville, Jan. 1 (DLSu). A Clay-colored Sparrow banded on SEFI, SF, on Dec. 7, showed up at a feeder in Bolinas, Dec. 11-13 (KH), and another was in SM on Dec. 23 (RSTh). Also in SM on Dec. 23 was a Grasshopper Sparrow (RSTh). One or two Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen through Jan. 1 at the Palo Alto Baylands (m.ob.); at least four Swamp Sparrows were along the Guadalupe River, SCL, on Dec. 18 (DKe), and six were reported on the Monterey Peninsula CBC, Dec. 29 (fide SRo). Good counts of White-throated Sparrows were had on the San Francisco CBC, Dec. 28, with 14, the Southern Marin CBC, Dec. 31, with 15 and the Point Reyes CBC Dec. 17 with 14. A Lapland Longspur at the Sierra Road summit, SCL, Dec. 11-30, joined at least two Chestnut-collared Longspurs still there through Dec. 30 (m.ob.). The only Evening Grosbeak report was of a single bird on the Pt. Reyes CBC Dec. 17 (ASH).

The monthly observation column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses." In general, birds in boldface are geographically or seasonally very rare in our region. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959, for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC

secretary at the address above.

Observers: Steve Allison, Jan Anderson, Stephen F. Bailey, Alan D. Barron, Florence Bennett, Bob Brandriff, George Chaniot, Les Chivana, Terry Colborn, Penelope Delavorius, Adrian Donavo, Ann Dewart, Todd Easterla, Al Eisner, Gil Ewing, Mike Feighner, Mia Feree, Susan Fishbine, Dave Goodward, Ed Greaves, Keith Hansen, Mike Healy, Alan Hopkins, George Hugenberg, Dan Keller, Clay Kempf, Ron LeValley, Gary Lester, Leslie Lieurance, Jim Lomax, Michael J. Mammoser, Mac McCormick, John McKean, Bert McKee, Peter J. Metropulos, Joe Morlan, Dan Nelson, Trent Orr, David Powell, Peter Pyle, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Mike M. Rogers, Steve C. Rotenborn, Steve Rovell, Ruth Rudesill, Barry Sauppe, Doug Shaw, Debra Shearwater, Dave Shuford, Dan Singer, Paul F. Springer, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling, David Suddjian, Scott B. Terrill, Gil Thompson, Ronald S. Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Jerry R. White, David Wimpfheimer, Mr. & Mrs. Wilson, Adam Winer, Bob Yutzy, Debey Zito.

Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Bird Box.

Abbreviations for counties: ALA. Alameda; BUT, Butte; CC, Contra Costa; COL, Colusa; DN, Del Norte; GLE, Glenn; HUM, Humboldt; MEN, Mendocino; MER, Merced; MON, Mono; MRN, Marin; MTY, Monterey; PLA, Placer; SAC, Sacramento; SBT, San Benito; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SF, San Francisco; SHA, Shasta; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; TRI, Trinity; YOL, Yolo

BIRDING CLASSES IN S.F.

Joe Morlan will again be offering three separate field ornithology classes (two 7-week sessions of each) through the San Francisco Community College District beginning January 31, February 1, and 2, 7 - 9:30 p.m.. Tuesday nights (Field Ornithology I) are an introduction to birds and birding; Wednesday and Thursday nights (Field Ornithology II and III) are continuing, species-by-species discussions, Wednesdays starting with alcids, hawks and gamebirds; Thursdays beginning with sparrows, blackbirds, orioles and tanagers. There are slides aplenty and lively discussions add spice to the evenings. Many of the best birders in the Bay Area are graduates of Joe's classes and we can't recommend them too highly.

Cost per 7-week session for each class is \$70. For further information, call the S. F. Community College District Community Services Office at (415) 561-1840.

Back Yard Birder

Meg Pauletich

SERENDIPITY - an apparent aptitude for making discoveries accidentally. Or, what makes a birder's day. We who do the annual Christmas Count actually count on serendipity. How about the year one of our group happened to glance skyward just as a flock of Tundra Swans flew overhead? Or the day we were the 4th and last car on a levee in the Delta and we were the only ones who noticed a Burrowing Owl perched on a rock roadside? What a treat! Many of birders' favorite sightings are simply serendipitous ones: the surprise and joy of being in the right place at the right time.

Part of my recovery from bursitis of the hip includes boring, repetitive leg lifts from various positions. To relieve the tedium, I set up facing the back yard. There was a lot of bird action going on: two Ruby-crowned Kinglets were disputing territory, flaring their crowns in typical feisty manner; juncos, a Song Sparrow, and Golden and White-crowned sparrows were diving in and out of shrubs, enjoying the rosemary blossoms. A bird caught my eye which appeared to be a White-crowned, but which had a different look to it. Stopping my boring leg lifts (any excuse), I focused my binoculars and was thrilled to see the first White-throated Sparrow to be counted in my yard. This bird's posture was more hunched than the erect posture of its cousin. Its back was browner and stripey and its bill was dark, not pink or yellowish like the White-crowned. The white throat was well-defined above the gray breast. It sported the characteristic yellow spots, one between each eye and its bill. More nervous and skittery than its cousins, it kept near cover while feeding.

Friends have told me that they have a White-throated Sparrow

at their feeders in wintertime in Orinda, and now I can put my envy to rest. These birds summer in Canada and spread south during the winter. They have a distinctive song, easily imitated: a sweet, quavering whistle that sounds to some like "Old Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody." They will sometimes respond to your imitation, even in winter (not the words, but the whistle).

The finch family (Fringillidae) is the largest bird family in number of species in North America, containing 83 species with 8 subspecies. Worldwide, there are 436 species within Fringillidae. Family members are diverse: cardinals, buntings, crossbills, redpolls, siskins, grosbeaks, juncos, finches, goldfinches, rosy finches, towhees, and sparrows. They are among the finest songbirds -- think of the Black-headed Grosbeak's arias. Most finches are migratory and are strong fliers. Many seem to enjoy the company of fellow finch family members, hence the mixed-species flocks in winter. When nesting, however, they are very territorial. Strong bills are characteristic of these seed-eaters, although they also enjoy wild fruit and many insects as well as seeds. Some family members, such as the crossbill, have specially-adapted bills. The latter uses its bill to force open pine-cone scales from which it extracts the hidden seeds with its tongue.

Next time you dismiss a flock of birds feeding together as "just sparrows," take a closer look. Along with the usual, you might find a handsome Fox Sparrow, a Song Sparrow, California or Rufous-side towhee, or Dark-eyed (how about slate-colored or pink-sided form?) Junco. These birds are easy to attract to your yard where you can even look for a handsome white-throated chap!

Breeding Bird Atlas

Ann Dewart

The Alameda County Breeding Bird Atlas enters its third year (of five) this spring. A joint venture of Golden Gate and Ohlone Audubon Societies, the Atlas is a massive volunteer effort to confirm breeding bird species in the county by dividing it into 5-kilometer-square blocks and thoroughly censusing, repeatedly, each block. It is a project of considerable scientific and ecological import, but in spite of the high-flown jargon, the whole thing is really very down-to-earth and birdy when you've got your great big square and it's time to go out and find some nests.

Alameda County is enormous, vaguely L-shaped, stretching from Albany south to Fremont and then east past the Altamont Pass. My particular 5-kilometer square in Oakland includes parts of Redwood, Chabot, and Joaquin Miller parks, Mills, Merritt, and Holy Names colleges, the Mormon Temple, and Eastmont Mall, the sublime to the divine to the grime, but, nonetheless, a nice blend of urban, park, and wilderness that has an expected species list of 70 to 80. The problem, of course, was how to begin.

Steve Margolin and I started that first March with a drive-around - a little local sight-seeing and a check-out of the area. In

April we walked a couple of miles in Redwood Park; it was spring and birds were plentiful, but the object wasn't to "tick" them, but to spy on them and figure out what they were doing and whether it could be construed as nesting behavior. The pure pleasure of atlasing set in the day we were wandering around the parking lot at Joaquin Miller and discovered a female robin sitting on a half-finished nest while the male continued to bring nesting material. Just across from it was a well-hidden Bushtit "bag," bustling with activity. We found it wasn't necessary to race around and cover great distances; small areas observed with care produced surprising abundance. One morning, right around the old regional park headquarters, I found several junco nests with tiny babies, just underneath the leaf litter; I chased a California Towhee from tree to tree until I finally saw it feed its very large baby; and I discovered a bluebird pair flitting about with two spotty youngsters in the nearby meadow. It's a great way to bird.

The project continues and of course could use more atlasing. There will be an owling class in late February/early March. Call Bob Richmond at (510) 475-5412 if you're interested.

Field Trips Calendar

Saturday, February 4

Lake Merced, San Francisco

Meet at 9 a.m. at the south end of Sunset Blvd. in the Lake Merced Circle parking area. (Muni bus service is available.) This is a good time to see grebes (six species on last year's trip) and other wintering waterfowl. Lunch is optional for this half-day trip. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983.

Sunday, February 5

Panoche Valley

Meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of Hwy. 25 and J-1 in Paicines, 12.5 miles south of Hollister. From there we will caravan east to I-5 south of Los Banos. Last year we saw Bald and Golden eagles, Ferruginous Hawks, Mountain Bluebirds, and both Vesper and Lark sparrows, plus other grassland birds and a variety of waterfowl (Little Panoche Reservoir).

Considering the distance involved in this trip, be sure to fill your gas tank before leaving Hollister, and carpool from the Bay Area if possible. Bring lunch and warm clothes. Rain cancels. Leader: Chris Carpenter (510) 569-9281 day, (510) 547-2201 eve. (*)

Sunday, February 5

Lake Merritt, Oakland

Meet at 9 a.m. at Grand Ave. and El Embarcadero by the Greek Colonade. Bring binoculars, scope, and field guide if you have them. This is an excellent opportunity to observe wintering ducks and grebes at close range and to study their field identification. This trip is recommended for beginners and is wheelchair accessible. Trip ends at noon. Rain cancels. Leader: Joan Zawaski (415) 433-1700 day; (510) 530-2427 eve. (*)

Wednesday February 8

Mini-trip to Coyote Hills Regional Park

Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot by the Visitors' Center at the end of the road. From the East Bay, take I-880 south to Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Turn right and continue west. Exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy.; turn right and continue north one mile to Patterson Ranch Rd. and follow the signs to Coyote Hills. From San Francisco take Hwy. 101 south beyond Redwood City, cross the Dumbarton Bridge and exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy.; go north one mile to Patterson Ranch Rd. and follow signs to Coyote Hills.

We will be looking for three species of teal and other wintering waterfowl. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 & Jean-Marie Spoelman. \$ (*)

Saturday, February 18

Tilden Regional Park

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Nature Center parking lot for a half-day trip. Enter the park from either the Spruce Gate or the Shasta Gate off Grizzly Peak Blvd. in Berkeley and follow signs

to the Nature center at north end of park. We will hike the trails of Jewel Lake, Nature Area, and Botanic Garden. Beginners welcome. Rain cancels. Leaders: Nikhil Kumaranayagam and Russ Wilson (510) 524-2399.

Saturday, March 4

Briones Reservoir, EBMUD Watershed

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Bear Creek Staging Area. Take Hwy. 24 east and exit at the Orinda turnoff, then turn left and go back under the freeway on Camino Pablo. Continue northwest about two miles to Bear Creek Rd. Turn right and drive about 4.25 miles to the Bear Creek Staging area on the left, just beyond Happy Valley Rd. (If you see the Briones Regional Park entrance, you've gone too far. Go back .25 mi.) Or, from the Berkeley area, cross through Tilden Regional Park on Wildcat Canyon Rd. and continue across San Pablo Dam Rd. onto Bear Creek Rd. 4.25 miles to the staging area.

We will be looking for wintering birds of the brushland, early migrants, and waterfowl. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510) 523-7108. (*)

Wednesday, March 9

Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon

We will meet at 9:30 a.m. Take Hwy 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel. At Walnut Creek go north on Hwy. 680 and take the very first exit, Ignacio Valley Rd. Go approximately 8 miles, then turn right onto Clayton Rd. Go one mile and make a right onto Mitchell Canyon Rd. and proceed to the parking lot at the end of the road.

This is a delightful area with easy streamside walking and many songbirds. Wear shoes suitable for walking in mud, and bring your lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman. (\$)

Plan Ahead:

Saturday, March 18

San Francisco Bird Blitz

Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983

Saturday/Sunday, March 18/19

Honey Lake

Leader: Bob Hirt (408) 446-4478

See March issue of *The Gull* for details on above trips.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (*).

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader,

FEBRUARY MEETING: SECRETS OF THE BAY

Thursday, February 9, 1995
Northbrae Community Church
941 The Alameda
Berkeley
7:30 p.m.

Emmy-award-winning film producer/director Judy Irving will present her film, *Secrets of the Bay*, produced by Independent Documentary Group, at our February meeting in Berkeley.

"A visually stunning environmental film, *Secrets of the Bay* reveals the magnificent wildlife hidden among the six million human inhabitants of the San Francisco Bay Area -- an endangered Peregrin Falcon nesting on the Bay Bridge . . . baby Harbor Seals learning to crawl into their marshland napping areas . . . a lovesick bird on a most unlikely "lover's lane" . . . a beautiful ballet featuring slow-motion photography of pelicans, avocets and a supporing cast of thousands."

Ms. Irving is an accomplished film maker, writer and photographer. Her credits include: *Dark Circle*, an award-winning contemporary portrait of the nuclear age; *Treasure of the Greenbelt*, vine pruners, cowboys, and endangered butterflies in a celebration of the Bay Area countryside; and *Quiet Revolution*, a public television series on sustainable development in small villages, filmed in Nepal, Zimbabwe, and Arkansas. She is presently at work on *White Noise*, a feature film about the battle of wits of a complacent yuppie and neo-Nazi skinheads; and *Hidden Treasures*, a depiction of Southern California's wetlands from San Diego to Baja.

A graduate of Connecticut College, with an M.A. in film from Stanford University, and the winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship in film, Judy Irving has traveled to two dozen countries on six continents and speaks French, German, Spanish and "halting" Russian. She has swum five "escapes" from Alcatraz and run in two marathons.

Please join us at our February meeting to welcome Judy Irving. We are fortunate to have such a strong voice and vision for the environment in the Bay Area.

Give your library an early
spring cleaning and donate
those unwanted books to the
GGAS Book Sale

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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Northern California Bird Box
(510) 524-5592
Weekly Rare Bird Summary
(415) 738-1499

5 species of loon have been seen in California

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